REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1, 3, 5 and 7-10 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, Applicants AMEND claims 1, 9 and 10 and CANCEL claims 4, 6 and 11.

MPEP § 707.02, "Applications Up for Third Action and 5-Year Applications," states:

> The supervisory patent examiners should impress their assistants with the fact that the shortest path to the final disposition of an application is by finding the best references on the first search and carefully applying them.
>
> The supervisory patent examiners are expected to personally check on the pendency of every application which is up for the third or subsequent official action with a view to finally concluding its prosecution.
>
> Any application that has been pending five years should be carefully studied by the supervisory patent examiner and every effort made to terminate its prosecution. In order to accomplish this result, the application is to be considered "special" by the examiner.

Applicants hereby respectfully request that the Examiner consult with his Supervisory Patent Examiner to expedite the conclusion of prosecution of the present application.

Claims 1 and 3-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Masuda et al. (U.S. 6,189,202) in view of Seto et al. (JP 03-171702). Claims 4, 6 and 11 have been canceled. Applicants respectfully traverse the prior art rejection of claims 1, 3, 5 and 7-10.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite:

> "A composite inductor element comprising:
> a block made of at least either resin or rubber having a magnetic material dispersed therein, external electrodes being provided on said block; and
> **at least three spirally wound coils buried in said block, end portions of each of the at least three coils being electrically connected to said external electrodes**; wherein
> the at least three coils are arranged such that axes of all of the at least three coils are different from each other and extend substantially parallel to one another; and
> **at least one of said at least three coils has a different electrical**

> **characteristic produced by at least one of (1) a different number of windings of said at least one of said at least three coils from that of the remainder of said at least three coils, (2) a different thickness of said at least one of said at least three coils from that of the remainder of said at least three coils, and (3) a different space between wound sections of said at least one of said at least three coils from that of the remainder of said at least three coils."** (emphasis added)

The Examiner acknowledged that Masuda et al. fails to teach or suggest at least one of the coils having a different electrical characteristic. However, the Examiner alleged that Seto et al. teaches an inductor having a plurality of coils 42-1, 42-2, wherein at least one of the coils 42-1, 42-2 has a different electrical characteristic produced by a different diameter of the at least one coil. Thus, the Examiner concluded that it would have been obvious "to use the coil design of Seto et al. in the inductor of Masuda et al. for the purpose of controlling the inductance." Applicants respectfully disagree.

Applicants' claim 1 has been amended to recite the features of "at least three spirally wound coils buried in said block, end portions of each of the at least three coils being electrically connected to said external electrodes" and "at least one of said at least three coils has a different electrical characteristic produced by at least one of (1) a different number of windings of said at least one of said at least three coils from that of the remainder of said at least three coils, (2) a different thickness of said at least one of said at least three coils from that of the remainder of said at least three coils, and (3) a different space between wound sections of said at least one of said at least three coils from that of the remainder of said at least three coils."

As acknowledged by the Examiner, at best, Seto et al. teaches that the coils 42-1 and 42-2 have different diameters. However, neither Seto et al. nor Masuda et al. teaches or suggest the feature of "at least one of said at least three coils has a different electrical characteristic produced by at least one of (1) **a different number of windings** of said at least one of said at least three coils from that of the remainder of said at least

three coils, (2) **a different thickness** of said at least one of said at least three coils from that of the remainder of said at least three coils, and (3) **a different space between wound sections** of said at least one of said at least three coils from that of the remainder of said at least three coils" (emphasis added) as recited in Applicants' claim 1.

Thus, Masuda et al. and Seto et al. clearly fail to teach or suggest the feature of "at least one of said at least three coils has a different electrical characteristic produced by at least one of (1) a different number of windings of said at least one of said at least three coils from that of the remainder of said at least three coils, (2) a different thickness of said at least one of said at least three coils from that of the remainder of said at least three coils, and (3) a different space between wound sections of said at least one of said at least three coils from that of the remainder of said at least three coils" (emphasis added) as recited in Applicants' claim 1.

In addition, Seto et al. teaches a common mode inductor which by definition includes **only two** coils, and cannot include "**at least three** spirally wound coils buried in said block, end portions of each of the at least three coils being electrically connected to said external electrodes" (emphasis added) as recited in Applicants' claim 1. Seto et al. neither teaches nor suggests that the structure of the coils disclosed therein could or should be used in a composite inductor element including at least three coils as recited in Applicants' claim 1, or that the structure of the coils disclosed therein is even suitable for use in a composite inductor element including at least three coils as recited in Applicants' claim 1. The Examiner is reminded that obviousness cannot be established by combining the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention, absent some teaching, suggestion, or incentive supporting the combination. In re Geiger, 815 F.2d 686, 2 USPQ 1276, 1278 (Fed. Cir. 1987).

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Masuda et al. and Seto et al., applied alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest the unique combination and arrangement of elements recited in Applicants' claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Masuda et al. in view of Seto et al.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 is allowable. Claims 3, 5 and 7-10 depend upon claim 1 and are therefore allowable for at least the reasons that claim 1 is allowable.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance are solicited.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 50-1353.

Respectfully submitted,

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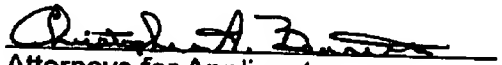

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